

William Berkeley Lewis to Andrew Jackson, February 8, 1813, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

WILLIAM B. LEWIS TO JACKSON.

Nashville, February 8, 1813.

P. S. . . . I had like to forgotten in the hurry of writing to inform you that a report has been softly whispered here since you left W. T.¹ that may if generally accredited may have a tendency to injure you; I keep a close look out, and if it becomes necessary, I shall contradict it in that manner which it deservs, with the insertion of piece in the papers with my name affixed. It has been stated to me that you declared previously to your leaving this Country that the same county should not contain both you and Genl. Wilkinson. knowing a statement of that kind to be so contrary to what you always assured me was your intentions, I shall feel myself perfectly authorised to contradict it in the most positive manner. I hold your reputation as dear to me as my own, and you may rest assured that injustice shall not be done to my absent friend. . . .²

1 West Tennessee.

2 This letter is characteristic of Lewis, who was most loyal to Jackson and very careful of his popularity. He was also very apt to know and deal with any gossip that affected the reputation of his friend. Major Lewis was Jackson's assistant deputy quartermaster. Replying to this letter on Feb. 21, 1813, Jackson said: "I am not astonished that I should have enemies in my absence, and feel grateful for your friendship on this occasion—you can with Justice and propriety, give the report the direct contradiction. Every officer of my detachment, who ever heard me speak a word upon the subject does know, that I always

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declared, that I marched with the true spirit of a soldier that I came to fight the battles of my country, and not to contend for rank but to harmonise, that if any dispute should arise between me and the Genl, the Publick service should not be interrupted thereby, if I had the power to controll it, but that the genl and myself would settle any dispute if any should arise without injury to the publick services or disturbance to the publick.”

In a letter to Lewis Cass, written probably in 1845, Lewis said that his acquaintance with Jackson went back to “some two or three years anterior to the declaration of war against England in June, 1812”. See “Major Lewis on the Nomination of Andrew Jackson”, by J. S. Bassett, *Am. Antiquarian Soc. Proceedings*, 1923, in which Lewis's letter is given complete. It is given in an abridged form in Parton's *Jackson*, II. 17–23.